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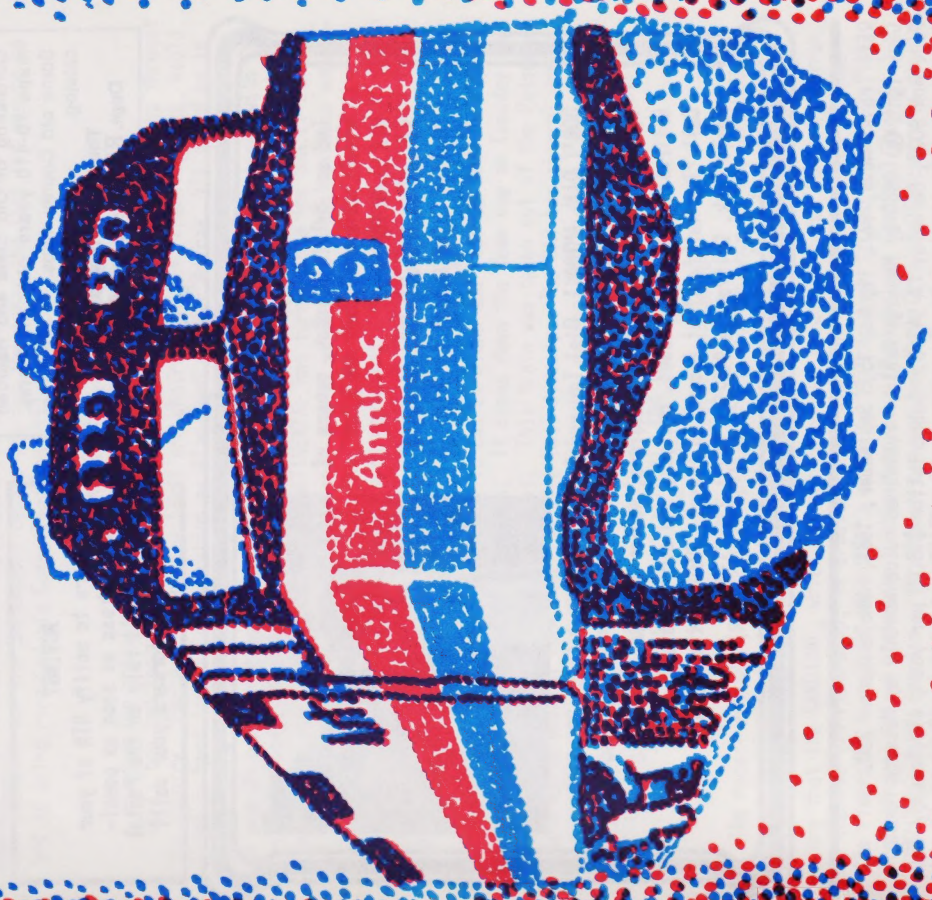

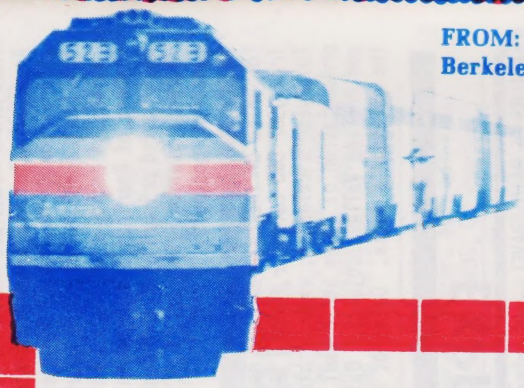

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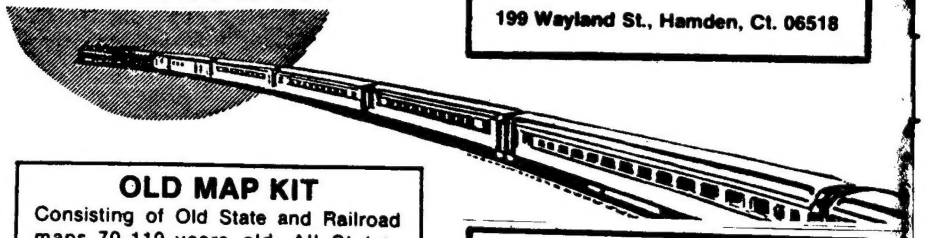

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LETTERS

With reference to Christopher Anderson's letter (RTN 228), I wholeheartedly agree with the suggestion that Amtrak do something to upgrade first class dining service in the microwave age. I know that many potential riders, including myself, are turned off by the prospect of a long journey by train with the generally dismal, Greyhound-level patronage Amtrak draws these days, and the discontinuance of quality dining service is the last straw. In my sleeping-car rides this year, I really don't feel I got my money's worth. But then Amtrak officials have said their ultimate goal is to price first class travel out of the market.

Mike Blaszak
Chicago, Illinois

Technically, the SHENANDOAH is not being discontinued. Technically, there have been two SHENANDOAHS running, one of which I have described in my 1979 AMTRAK LAW Perforation as illegal and that is the one being discontinued. Under the Transportation Secretary Brock Adams recommendations to Congress--with the force of law unless specifically modified by Congress, the Washington leg of the BROADWAY and the SHENANDOAH became one and the same, and that leg was to be and is being rerouted via Cumberland and Pittsburgh.

Robert J. Swan
Long Beach, California

I enjoyed the article "VIA Recalls the Good Old Days" in RTN 225...

It is too bad that VIA seems to be headed toward an end to many trains thruout the country. Perhaps if the president and chairman of VIA, Frank Roberts, would fight as hard for his organization as Alan Boyd did for Amtrak, VIA would be in better shape to fight the federal government. It also becomes obvious that the CN and CP just don't care about running VIA's passenger trains on time (with CN being the worst offender). Even short-haul high-speed trains are late, such as the Rapidos and Turbo. The SUPER CONTINENTAL has turned into the SUNSET LIMITED of the VIA system (to be on time it only has to go 35mph). With business expanding at an ever-increasing rate, VIA has to use marginal equipment, and put up with the breakdowns that occur with such equipment. Mr. Kamisher hit it right on the head when he pointed out the only real asset that VIA has--service and its polite employees (and of course beautiful scenery).

As for the Muskeg Mixed that he saw in the Edmonton Station, it runs from the Dunvegan Yards on Tuesday and Sunday to Lac La Biche and ties up for the night. The next day it goes on to Waterways. It comes down the same way on Tuesday, but generally comes right thru on Fridays. This train was taken out of the Passenger Train Guide when CN took over the line last January. The NAR has several wooden coaches/cabooses (all built over 70 years ago), express and baggage cars, and a business car, the "Aunuri". All of this equipment can be seen in the Edmonton Station. This train has one of the friendliest crews in the world, who invite you in for dinner (a real dinner with all the trimmings).

Tom Higgins
East Brunswick, New Jersey

The recent article (RTN 226) protesting the discontinuance of the CARDINAL between Washington DC and Cincinnati OH was very amusing. This is especially so since many so-called rail advocates are trying to peddle a cock and bull story that the CARDINAL, which has not responded to any measures taken by Amtrak to improve its ridership, is a better train than the SHENANDOAH, which has had its ridership increased from 5000 a month in 1979 to over 12,000 a month in 1981. According to Amtrak spokesman Debbie Marciniak (Parkersburg Sentinal Aug 17) the CARDINAL, which carries a thru coach between New York City and Chicago via Charleston WV, provides checked baggage service, carries sleepers, has a mail car between

Washington DC and Chicago, and has a decent dining service, is not meeting the criterion of 150 passengers set up by Congress for all long-distance passenger trains. At the same time the SHENANDOAH, which has none of the services associated with a first class passenger train and has never been advertised west of Cumberland MD, carried 12,713 passengers in June 1981, according to Amtrak... According to RTN the CARDINAL (or "Robert Byrd Special") which carried 6,953 passengers in Feb 1981 or 3,421 less than the SHENANDOAH, lost over 2000 riders a month for seven straight months, for a grand loss of over 14,000 riders from its high of August 1980.

The Florida Association of Railroad Passengers hopes you will print this letter along with our petition signed by Amtrak passengers who support the retention of the SILVER STAR, SILVER METEOR, PALMETTO and SHENANDOAH, which has been deliberately sabotaged by Amtrak.

Walter Diem, President
Florida Association of Railroad Passengers
Sarasota, Florida

(Editor's note: Mr. Diem included with his letter the above-mentioned petition bearing a large number of signatures.)

Regarding the 1990 scenario published in RTN (#228): Almost every main-line rail route in the Desert would be used by one or two daily trains, linking nearly every city which could be connected by the present freight railroad network.

On the other hand, some 15 metropolitan areas of over 250,000 persons in the more populous half of the country would still be without Amtrak service! (The map omits unserved cities.) The Atlantic City corridor is omitted; in fact there would be no additional spurs to the Northeast Corridor. Detroit would not be directly linked with Indianapolis or Columbus. Passengers could travel on one of two daily trains between the town of Great Falls and Denver, some 700 miles apart; but not between the sizeable cities of Tulsa and Oklahoma City, only 117 miles apart.

Amtrak's funding problems are more related to the geographical misallocation of its resources than we like to admit. Taxpayer equity requires that a moratorium be placed on new route additions in the Desert while the populous half of the country is brought up to a similar level of per-capita Amtrak service.

If this is done, Amtrak service will be made available to far more people in the larger markets; and Amtrak will receive more general political support. Also, its dismal share of the intercity travel market will rise to a level more befitting a national passenger train system.

John R. Pawson
Willow Grove, Pennsylvania

I really appreciate the Amtrak ridership figures you publish in RTN and appreciate the controversy about whether or not to count passengers on long distance trains as part of long distance or corridor totals.

...May I offer a possible solution. Why not double-count these passengers, counting the total for both the long distance trains and the corridors. This would accurately reflect the ridership for both. A necessary correction would then be made in the system total to eliminate these duplications.

Rev. John Peterson
Kennedy, Minnesota

BACK ISSUES

Back issues of Rail Travel News are in constant demand, especially from recent subscribers. While the earliest issues of RTN are out of print, we do have a good stock of the more recent years. In particular, we recommend our Tenth Anniversary Year volume--all the issues of 1980, 18 issues sent all in one parcel at the price of $8 postpaid (no tax). Write for information on other back issues. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Amtrak train 51, the CARDINAL, pulls into Chicago on an August day. J. Ferry photo.

CARDINAL IS DISCONTINUED; DOT PACKS AMTRAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

One of the most controversial Amtrak Board meetings ever held takes place in Chicago Sep 25. Before the meeting, on Sep 8, the White House announced the appointment of six DOT representatives to the Amtrak Board, putting it firmly in control of the rail passenger corporation's Board. Legally the White House could do this because the new Board is not yet formed, and these temporary appointments can be made for a period of up to 90 days. Immediately there was much speculation over what the DOT was aiming to do with Amtrak. Was it going to vote Alan Boyd out of the presidency? Was it going to discontinue the CARDINAL? Was it going to re-draw the Amtrak system map to fit a $613 million budget that the White House is still calling for? Congressman Florio called a news conference on Sep 15 and warned the White House against using this occasion for effecting "sweeping changes" in Amtrak. DOT Secretary Lewis gave some assurances, and it was believed that the main reason for the Board takeover was to have control over the formation of Amtrak Commuter, the commuter subsidiary that the law requires Amtrak to form by Nov 1 (the subsidiary will absorb the Northeast Corridor commuter service in fiscal year 1983). But also the DOT appeared interested in the outcome of the CARDINAL question. An Amtrak spokesman said that the CARDINAL was already out, and is deleted from Amtrak's computer. NARP said that Alan Boyd met with four Senators on Sep 16 on the matter of the CARDINAL, and that they sent a letter to the Senate Appropriations Committee outlining what would be needed to retain the train. The Committee posponed its meeting until after President Reagan's speech to the nation on the federal budget, altho the House has already completed its appropriations bill. (President Reagan in his Sep 24 speech asked for an across-the-board 12½% further budget cut of Federal agencies. It is believed that this would apply to the DOT as a whole, and that Amtrak would not be singled out for such a cut, altho Washington observers still say that Amtrak remains high on the Administration's hit list.) There was also concern that the Administration might use a line-item veto on Amtrak appropriations, or try to get Congress to approve impoundment of funds,

(continued on page 20)

RAIL CANADA

TRANSPORT 2000 CANADA President Guy Chartrand on Sep 11 called on Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin to help save the Amtrak PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL route between Seattle and Vancouver by arranging for the Canadian government to share in the operation of the train the way it does with the new Toronto-New York MAPLE LEAF. Said Chartrand: "It is noteworthy that your department is in the process of spending several hundred million dollars to upgrade the Vancouver International Airport, at a time when the air mode appears to have begun a process of irreversible decline, particularly on short-haul routes. A small fraction of this amount would cover the continuation of one of the last three passenger trains still serving Canada's third largest city. This service would connect it conveniently with many American cities all the way to Southern California. Chartrand noted also that "The government's new energy pricing policy will place the automobile and the airplane, even with the massive subsidies they now receive, beyond the reach of an increasing proportion of Canadians. In this new economic environment, it is more imperative than ever that we keep all our options open to avert the progressive immobilization of our country."

ANONYMOUS TRANSPORT MINISTRY OFFICIAL on Sep 16 charged Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin with ineptitude in his handling of the announced rail passenger cutbacks. A Transport Ministry economist delivered to the Toronto Star a report charging that Pepin had seriously over-estimated the $100 million savings that the cutbacks were supposed to achieve. He also charged Pepin with circumventing the proper channels and thereby squashing public debate on the cutback issue. Said he, "Even if you don't give a damn about passenger service in this country, you have to be worried about the way this thing is being done." The newspaper tended to agree with him, and called for Canadian Transport Commission hearings into the cutbacks.

A FARE INCREASE is coming for VIA Rail Canada. The corporation announced on Sep 8 that a general fare hike of 10% will become effective Oct 8. VIA filed the new rates with the Canadian Transport Commission. According to Garth Campbell, VIA's VP-Marketing, the fare increase is directly attributable to the impact of inflation on VIA's costs of doing business. Under the terms of VIA's APEX fare plan, bookings made 14 days before departure are subject to a 40% discount on transportation and accommodation charges, when the regular one-way fare is at least $55. This minimum will rise from the current $48.

GREATER WINNIPEG WATER DISTRICT RAILWAY was ridden by reader Thomas Swinney this summer, and he reports that not mentioned in the District's publicity on its Sunday excursion train are the facts that seats should be reserved in advance and that no refreshments are available at Indian Bay.

THE DISCONTINUANCE OF the SUPER CONTINENTAL route in Western Canada will mean that the tourist business to Jasper will be severely affected, reports the Toronto Star. A Vancouver agency that specializes in bringing Asian, Australian and other foreign tourists to the Canadian Rockies says that its clients will not be interested in traveling there by bus, and at least $5 million per year in tourist trade will be lost the popular resort area.

THE CANADIAN SEPARATISTS have been given a "powerful new weapon" in the announced passenger train cuts, reports the Toronto Star. A lack of political sensitivity on the part of the Trudeau administration is adding fuel to the fires of regional alienation. Western Canadians are aware that the cuts handed them are not matched by cuts in populous Eastern Canada. The cuts are scheduled to take effect Nov 15.

According to Railway Gazette International, the reductions are in exchange for an increase in VIA's capital budget for the purchase of more LRC equipment.

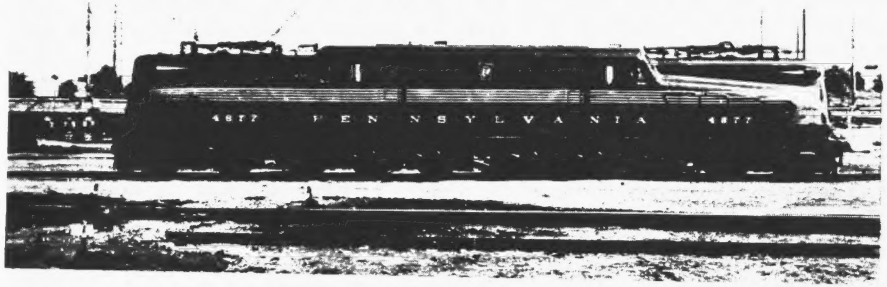
CANADIAN TRANSPORT COMMISSION recently ordered VIA to provide mail and express service on train 185 and 186 that run between Sudbury and White River, Ontario.

ONTARIO CITY REPRESENTATIVES have called upon the province of Ontario to take over the Barrie, Stouffville and Havelock commuter runs that are to be cut from the VIA system Nov 15, and to run them with the assistance of the federal government.

CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAY is selling for scrap the following passenger cars: coaches 2247, 2248, 5188, 5192, 5220, 5224 and 5290; and Sceneramic Dome 2702. The dome is described as having steam damage thruout; electrical panels, terminals, etc. rusted thruout car; and missing two engines, toaster, coffeemaker and microwave oven. Closing date for bids was Sep 21.

THE FURY OF Canadians over the announced passenger train cuts continued to be reflected in newspaper editorials, letters, cartoons and articles. The Edmonton Journal recently ran a cartoon which pictured Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin as one of a trio of strait-jacketed asylum inmates. He is saying: "I'm okay--you're okay! I've cancelled more train service in the West and in the Maritimes..and I've upgraded service in central Canada so nobody but Liberals can get here!"

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT



NJ TRANSIT restored the Tuscan Red GG-1 engine #4877 shown in the above photo. Work was done at the Raritan NJ shop, using stencils and drawings prepared by Michael Burhstin, who took the above photo. These were based upon data supplied by Russ Wilcox of the Friends of the GG-1 Committee (who is now the owner of the 4935). Painting was finished June 1, and the first trip took place June 6, on the Philadelphia-Lancaster NRHS Chapters' Farewell to Amtrak's GG-1 trip, along with GG-1 #4876, F-40 #363 working as a power car, and 16 Amfleet cars. The engine is now in regular New York-South Amboy service. NJ Transit had planned such a restoration for over a year, but when some funding problems arose, the Jersey Central Chapter, NRHS, donated $1500 for the paint. Mr. Burshtin and two Conrail painters took 2½ weeks to do the entire job, using authentic DuPont paint matches, in Imron polyurethane paint.

NJ TRANSIT'S ORDER for 17 F-40 locomotives will be delivered by November, and the first three of Bombardier's Comet II push-pull cars will arrive in December. A total of 20 cab and 97 trailer cars will arrive thruout 1982, to be used to replace all existing ex-CNJ equipment on the Raritan Valley and North Jersey Coast Lines. The ex-PRR North Jersey Coast Line locomotive-hauled trains will continue with their existing cars (ex-PRR CONGRESSIONAL and Santa Fe coaches), but will terminate at Newark (similar to the ex-CNJ service) when the GG-1s are removed from service. All GG-1 service is expected to end by Dec 31. Of NJ Transit's 13 GG-1s, (#4872-4884), #4874 and 4878 were as of last month out of service due to blown transformers, and are not expected to be repaired.

STUDY OF STRESS in urban bus drivers is being funded by UMTA, who on Sep 22 okayed the first installment of $150,000 in the $1 million study being performed on San Francisco Muni Railway drivers by the University of California, San Fran-

cisco. Selected drivers will be wired up with sensors as they work, to record their blood pressure, heart rate and other measures as well as carbon monoxide and other environmental stressors. The study will take three years.

NEW YORK'S MTA in August removed brackets it had placed on 764 R-46 subway cars after cracks were found in the cars' undercarriages. The current collector brackets apparently resulted in four of eight recent subway car fires. The National Transportation Safety Board brought this incident out in a report on subway safety it released Sep 22. The Board also called for more frequent inspection of cars, for the placement of two fire extinguishers in each car, and for better emergency training and placement of emergency instructions in cars. The MTA said that most of the recommendations either already were or are being implemented.

AN EXTENSION OF the RTA's Chicago-Kenosha commuter service to Racine could begin by next June if UMTA has funds available for track work to bring the C&NW line up to 60mph speeds. Startup of service has been delayed a year because of economic and labor agreement problems.

AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSIT Association accused Reagan this month of being "clearly out of step with the world" in his mass transit policies. While other countries are building new transit lines and charging low fares (20¢ in Rome, 25¢ in Vienna, 35¢ in Paris), the U.S. is cutting back on Federal funding of transit and causing fares to be increased. Fare hikes have resulted in a 2% dropoff of ridership nationwide in the first six months of 1981, according to APTA. When fares hit $1.20 early this year in London, APTA said, the government reversed its policies and added $200 million in subsidies, cutting fares 25%.

CHICAGO TRANSIT RIDERS may be the first in the U.S. to be charged a $1.00 fare if RTA plans come to fruition. The fare, which is now 90¢, would go up April 1.

A BILL TO restore the Red Cars to Southern California, starting with purchase of to-be-abandoned right of way between Manchester and the south Compton city line was passed and sent to Gov. Brown for his signature in mid-September. Planners have in mind a partially-elevated double track for LRVs from Long Beach to Union Station in downtown Los Angeles.

FUTURE OF FREIGHT service on the Long Island Rail Road is the subject of a public hearing Oct 1 in Mineola NY. In August the ICC ruled that the LIRR's 12½% surcharge on freight, which it has been collecting since 1973, is illegal, and ordered the railroad to repay it. The amount would be $70 million, and repayment of it would obviously be a major financial blow to the already deficit-plagued freight operation. One of the questions being asked at the hearing is whether LIRR freight service should be discontinued entirely.

NEW YORK STATE held a public hearing in New City NY on Sep 16 to solicit ideas about the West Shore Line, on the West Shore of the Hudson River between Hoboken NJ and Newburgh NY, and whether reinstitution of rail commuter service there is a viable possibility.

"ATLANTIC CITY RAILWAY", a firm owned by 23-year old Thomas Frawley, is negotiating with NJ Transit to take over South Jersey commuter service and to operate a Philadelphia-Atlantic City deluxe gamblers' rail service.

SOUTH JERSEY LINES were the subject of an article by Steve Dunham in our last issue. RTN's Paul Rayton visited them this summer, and reports on the laxness of the operation. At Cape May an engineer asked him for the time ("What time you got?"); apparently the engineer didn't have an operating watch. Paul replied that it was 6:59pm (on a Saturday), and the engineer answered, "Well, guess it's time to go." And they departed with all of 8-10 passengers.

THE GUARDIAN ANGELS, the unarmed volunteer organization that tries to keep transit lines orderly, began work in Boston on Sep 22, starting with the MBTA's Orange Line.

PULLMAN TRANSPORTATION COMPANY would be a separate entity, consisting of the Pullman-Standard operation now owned by Wheelabrator-Frye, Inc. Wheelabrator bought Pullman Inc. last November, and it wants to get the car-building subsidiary into a separate status because of the fluctuating nature of its finances.

TOWARD RAILROAD ISOLATIONISM
Discontinuing the International Trains
by James Russell

In the year 1972 Congress, distressed by a lackluster first year for Amtrak under president Roger Lewis, was in a mood to expand Amtrak. In upping its budget the lawmakers specifically wrote in the requirement that Amtrak initiate service to Canada and Mexico, and a few million dollars for that purpose were added to the Amtrak appropriation.

Three international trains resulted from this Congressional mandate: the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL, the INTER-AMERICAN and the MONTREALER. Of these, the MONTREALER has been the most successful, in part because of major support from backers along the U.S. portion of its route. Of the three, the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL was the first to run--on July 17, 1972. The MONTREALER began operation on Sep 29, 1972, while the INTER-AMERICAN didn't get going until Jan 27, 1973.

The DOT, which exercises considerable influence over Amtrak, has never liked the international trains--especially since they were added on by Congress and were not the brainchild of the DOT. They are regarded as expendable appendages. And so in this year of budget cutting, it seems not at all surprising that two of them should get the axe. The INTER-AMERICAN is to lose its leg to the border, and the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL get knocked out completely.

The INTER-AMERICAN is the subject of the article following this one, while here we focus on the Seattle-Vancouver B.C. service.

Unknown to us at the time, our trip last May on the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL was to be our last one on this train. In a brief remark earlier in RTN (issue #224) we described the operation as "erratic." That term is applicable not only to our trip, but also to the operation as a whole over the nine years since it began.

The clock in the tower is reading exactly 6:00 on a long, late spring evening in Seattle as the incoming COAST STARLIGHT (right) unloads. At left are the four cars of the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL which will depart 1¼ hours later, so passengers can continue their journey to British Columbia or other points north of Seattle. All photos by the author.

The southbound PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL pulls into Seattle on a May 1981 day. Poorly guarded crossings are typical of much of the route.

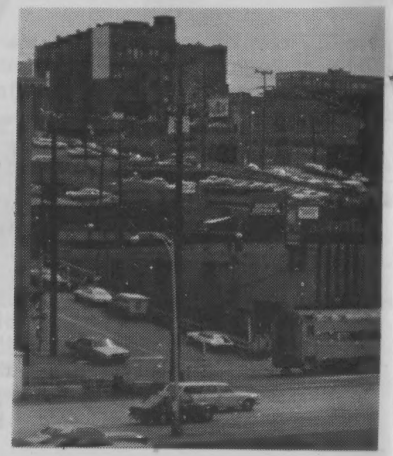
We reached Seattle at 6pm after a nice trip on the COAST STARLIGHT. Our immediate destination was Vancouver, but we wouldn't be there for almost six more hours, even tho the distance was only 156 miles. This fact was due not to slow train speeds, but to all the waiting time built into a passenger's itinerary. We would have to wait in the Seattle depot for 1¼ hours before the Vancouver train departed, and when we neared the Canadian border we would have to wait over a half hour more while customs inspectors went thru our train. Now if only the STARLIGHT ran thru to Vancouver and the customs men rode the train and made their inspections aboard without the necessity of stopping, Amtrak would have a far better operation. When we rode the pre-Amtrak INTERNATIONAL, customs officials rode with us and went thru their formalities without delaying the train.

Our train passed thru a lot of interesting waterside scenery on its route to Vancouver. Days are long this far north in May, and we watched a colorful sunset over the water, as the sun seemed to refuse to budge any closer to the horizon. Unfortunately, the frozen-in-time aspect of the solar orb seemed to repeat and emphasize the slow progress of our trip. Ironically, our train was not poking along. Sometimes it would run slowly, but there were times when its speed must have been greater than any the STARLIGHT managed on the trip from California. And these bursts of speed were exciting, because they occurred at places where common sense would dictate slowness and caution, due to the heavy highway traffic on both sides of us and the poorly guarded crossings.

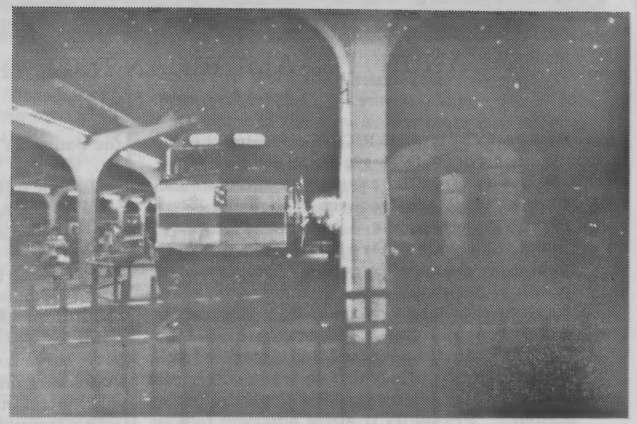
The sun finally set at about 8:30, and at 9:01 we made a stop at Burlington-Mt. Vernon. Bellingham came at 9:42, and at 10:10 we reached Blaine and customs inspection. Everything shut down for the next 32 minutes while we sat and twiddled our thumbs. An inspector finally reached our car, and he got thru our section (the lower level of the third of four cars) quite rapidly. Why did it take so long for the whole train? Patronage was not all that great. After a long while he returned to look thru a backpack in the storage area of our car. Finally we were on our way once more, and after a stop at New Westminster at 11:11, we reached Vancouver at 11:35, nine minutes ahead of schedule.

Now if this were a heads-up operation we could have been in Vancouver about 9:00 instead of close to midnight. And that even without any high-tech railroad equipment. Never mind that the French are starting to run the world's fastest train this week--faster even than the Japanese Bullet Train. We would settle for conventional trains properly scheduled. But instead we seem to be taking our cues from Mexico rather than from Japan and France.

The fact that we must discontinue this train--or any train--is an outrage. The PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL has never been properly scheduled or marketed. A big market exists for train service on the route; but, as an Amtrak spokesman said, once a train is gone it's very hard to get it back on.



Three years after its introduction the train looked like this, still running old conventional equipment pulled by an aging E unit. Near the end of 1975 the train was put out of operation for four months by damage to the Fraser River Bridge. Here train is southbound into Seattle, not far from location shown in upper photo.



(Right:) Arrival in Vancouver is convenient neither in time nor location, being near midnight in a section of town isolated from the city center. VIA equipment rests on adjoining track.

AN INTER-AMERICAN INTERPRETATION
by Adron Hall

The INTER-AMERICAN (I-A) has been a controversial train since its inception. As is often the case with controversial trains, there are frequent changes of schedules, equipment, etc., in an attempt to make the service more acceptable to the public, or to appease public officials and political personalities. Changes are being implemented again on the I-A on October 1 --this time deletion of the southernmost legs Temple-Houston and San Antonio-Laredo, reduction of service to tri-weekly, and routing of the train into SP's depot in San Antonio. Presently it stops adjacent to a vacant lot at Commerce Street, with passengers bused to the Amtrak SP Depot.

The I-A had its beginning as a "new" Amtrak route in 1973, and as such restored rail passenger service to Little Rock, Texarkana, Austin, Laredo and other towns mostly along the Missouri Pacific, former route of the TEXAS EAGLE, and additional service to Dallas and Ft. Worth (served by the TEXAS CHIEF--LONE STAR) and San Antonio (served additionally by the SUNSET LIMITED). Operation was tri-weekly, but with the elimination of the LONE STAR in 1979, operation was boosted to daily, and the train was split in Temple to provide service to Houston and continue the leg to San Antonio and Laredo. Equipment has not been the most functional, with old, dilapidated cars for several years, then the inadequate (for long distance) Amfleet equipment, but now replaced by Superliners including a full diner and a sleeper.

The train was marginally successful, and has been threatened by previous Amtrak cutbacks. The most recent cutback scenario was no exception, with actual consideration to eliminate service south of St. Louis. However, service survives once again with thru cars connecting to the westbound SUNSET at San Antonio.

So why did Amtrak decide to cut off the legs of the I-A? Low ridership is probably one of the factors, since the whole route, possibly with the exception of St. Louis-Chicago, has had marginal patronage (low PM/TM compared to several other long distance trains) and one would expect the southern extremities of the route to have less ridership.

Several problems have contributed to the low patronage, not the least of which is the circuitous routing, especially from Houston. Upon departing that city, the train actually heads southwesterly on the SP for 37 miles to Rosenberg, thence northwesterly along the Santa Fe to Temple, and finally north to Ft. Worth. Then a due east route thru Dallas is followed almost 200 miles to Longview TX, where the train finally is aimed for St. Louis and Chicago. This around-the-elbow route has covered almost 500 miles. The Missouri Pacific route directly north out of Houston reaches Longview in about 230 miles. Recently a group bound for St. Louis boarded at the Houston station. They were surprised later at Temple to learn they would be going thru Ft. Worth and Dallas to reach St. Louis.

The low ridership on the I-A's southern legs was evident on Sep 3, when the train departed Houston, a city of over 2 million population, with 28 passengers. The small group had lots of room in the one Superliner coach in use--the baggage coach was not being used. Another problem with this leg, besides heading in the wrong direction for the first several miles, is its run over the SP to Rosenberg TX. This line, also the route of the SUNSET, is slow--it took 30 minutes to get out of Houston. The train had traveled 25 miles in the first hour. The track and right-of-way resembled an unkempt but heavily-used branch line. Pulling into a siding well out of the city, the little train stopped to meet a long SP freight train --this where the eastbound SUNSET should have been met; however the latter was two hours late. The I-A resumed its rambling pace, slowing to 10mph across several grade crossings in Sugarland (maybe some day the trains will have to stop at a grade crossing traffic light to let the autos pass!) and again at a reported broken rail.

Rosenberg was reached eight minutes late, and high speed was commenced immediately upon departure on the Santa Fe. This line was not quite as smooth as one might expect of the Santa Fe, but heavy unit coal and grain trains do take their toll on a roadbed. The I-A met or passed 15 freights (four coal and two grain) between Rosenberg and Temple; however, it was never delayed or even slowed by this considerable traffic on the single-tracked line. Most of the switches along this route produced violent lateral movement of the passenger cars, enough to spill coffee and beer all over, thus entailing cleanup chores by the passengers. Several jovial passengers in one group (one wore a T-shirt with the inscription: Happy as a Hot Dog in a Cool Pool of Mud) referred to the bumps as "air pockets", and another said, "The railroad has potholes too!" However, they were enjoying this first rail trip so well, they were already planning a group trip from Houston to New Orleans, and inquired of the conductor if there was Amtrak service between those two cities. He happily gave them the schedule.

Arrival in front of the beautiful Temple TX station (ex-Santa Fe traditional) was but six minutes late. The 30 or so passengers were to have a considerable wait, however, as the Laredo section was 1hr, 20mins late. With its arrival, there commenced a grand example of another problem for the I-A legs and for most railroad operations: that of union labor. A switching crew of eight men were involved in putting the I-A's two sections together. One "driver" removed the single F-40 engine from the Houston section on track 1 and attached it to the Laredo engine and cars. Then another "driver" moved the two engines and Laredo section from track 2 back to track 1 to couple to the Houston coaches. Finally the road engineer climbed aboard for departure. One would have thought they were getting practice; however, the same type of exercise occurred when four hours later the southbound train was separated. Then with departure of the assembled train one hour late, a stop was made at the end of the station track for the trainman to hand-throw the switch to the main line, then stopped again after moving by to let him throw it back and climb aboard. Of course, all that stopping and starting could have been avoided, and time and fuel saved for Amtrak if one of those station switching crewmen could have walked 50 feet and let the train depart nonstop! Incidentally, these station tracks for switching the I-A were installed by Amtrak at a cost of several thousands of dollars. After October 1 they will not be used.

With train 22 departing one hour late, the southbound #21, which had been on time at Ft. Worth, was held at Cleburne to let #22 pass, so was 1hr, 3mins late at Temple. After switching, the Laredo section departed 1hr, 8mins late with 29 coach and two sleeper passengers. A few blocks from the sta-

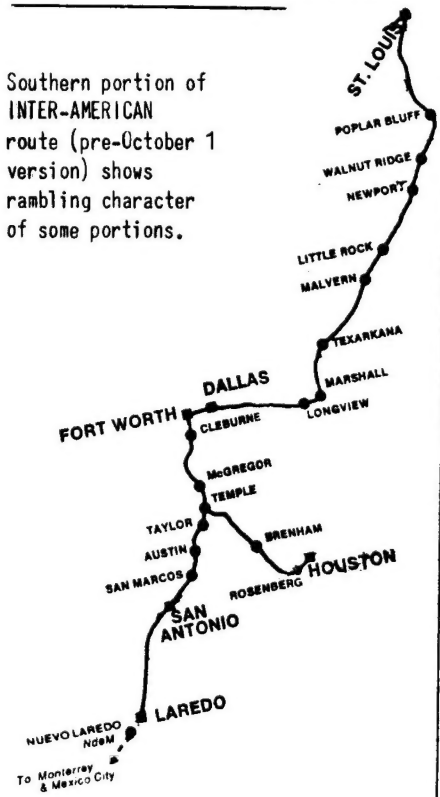
The Superliner-equipped INTER-AMERICAN leaves Chicago on a recent August afternoon. (Train in background is the Chicago-Detroit TWILIGHT LIMITED departing simultaneously.) Photo by Jack Ferry.

tion the train heads south on the M-K-T Railway, and a good, steady 60mph is maintained thru rolling, green pastures on clickety-clack track, and dinner in a Superliner diner with the sun setting.

At Taylor, 1hr, 2mins late, the 4-car train was off speeding thru the dark of the night on the Missouri Pacific and some of the smoothest rail one might ever experience. Lights slipping by outside in towns and farmland were the only indications of movement. The conductor admitted that this section had been recently rebuilt, but all MP trackage encountered between Laredo and St. Louis proved to be very good.

At Austin 10 passengers detrained, and in San Antonio 20 more departed. This correspondent and a friend stood in disbelief at the door of the coach as we saw that two coach passengers remained for the 153-mile journey to Laredo--us. The boarding conductor greeted us with word that there were two passengers in the sleeper for Laredo. We didn't have the heart to ask if they ever went south with fewer than this.

Arrival in Laredo, amongst a flurry of bats coming down from the eaves of the station, was at 2:12am, 52mins late. The conductor and trainman crawled into the sleeper for a little shuteye, as they would work the train northbound at 5:55am. Meanwhile the equipment was pulled out, serviced, turned and returned to the station track in one hour.



Southern portion of INTER-AMERICAN route (pre-October 1 version) shows rambling character of some portions.

The station agent didn't seem overly concerned about the impending discontinuance of this leg, since he would be paid full salary for two or three years under his contract. He was also hopeful that Mexico would extend the AZTEC EAGLE to San Antonio. He had had calls about it today from Houston and Washington, and word was that there would be a meeting between Amtrak and Mexican National officials in Mexico City soon. There should be a market for this thru service as Laredo and Nuevo Laredo have a combined population of about 200,000 and Monterrey to the south has 2 to 3 million residents, and Mexico City over 10 million.

The morning departure for #22 at 5:55 saw 11 passengers boarding. The friendly conductor had been up and brewed a pot of coffee in the Superliner diner and laid out some fresh Danish rolls. These were free--the Amtrak dining car crew detrains in San Antonio for the night, then reboards in the morning for the trek back to Chicago.

The 3-hour trip north to San Antonio was uneventful, as all 11 passengers were asleep for at least the first two hours. In San Antonio, workmen were seen already building a connecting track between the MP and the SP tracks, so that on October 1 the I-A can enter the SP station and transfer coaches to the westbound SUNSET. The I-A will be entering the station eastbound, so the seats in the coaches will have to be turned.

The continuation of the I-A northbound this day found the train filled by Dallas with a Labor Day crowd of about 300 passengers--quite an increase from the 11 sleepy patrons from Laredo. A car was added in St. Louis and standing room only was the order of the day to Chicago. Incidentally, the train arrived in St. Louis 52mins early but departed 20mins late due to trouble connecting the electrical cables of the added coach. It was also interesting that a couple boarded in Ft. Worth bound for Crawfordsville IN via Amtrak's new HOOSIER STATE.

The remaining route of the I-A passes thru some cities with good potential for rail passenger patronage, given the good tracks, excellent train equipment, and thru cars to the west. Area population of San Antonio is almost one million; Austin 460,000; Dallas-Ft. Worth 2.5 million; Little Rock 360,000; St. Louis nearly 2.5 million; and Chicago 7 million. Perhaps the I-A has been pared for the last time.

At the August 26 Amtrak Board meeting when the new route structure was announced, Alan Boyd was asked how the I-A could retain its name now that its southern terminus would be longer be the border of Mexico. He said he hadn't thought of that.

AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES

JUNE 1981 FIGURES--SECOND COLUMN IS % INCREASE OVER 1980

Metroliners	101,240	-25.3
NE Corr Conventional	490,267	-12.3
Phila-NH-Springfield	22,385	2.5
NY-Philadelphia	211,170	5.8
Phila-Harrisburg	71,674	-11.7
New York-Harrisburg	32,327	8.1
TOTAL NE CORRIDOR:	929,063	-9.5
NY-Niagara Falls	65,936	.0
Chicago-St. Louis	25,741	-5.0
Chicago-Milwaukee	23,972	-9.5
Chic.-Detroit/Toledo	39,589	-7.9
Chicago-Carbondale	12,699	-7.9
Chicago-Quincy	5,274	-24.5
L.A.-San Diego	111,419	-9.3
Seattle-Eugene	7,956	-15.9
Vancouver-Seattle	7,445	15.9
Washington-Cincinnati	12,713	8.9
Wash.-Martinsburg	22,206	-6.9
Oakland-Bakersfield	18,279	22.1
New York-Montreal	7,324	-10.6
Chicago-Port Huron	9,925	2.5
Chicago-Dubuque	3,660	-5.1
Chicago-Duluth	9,996	40.0
Chicago-Valparaiso	21,144	12.3
Chicago-Indianapolis	7,145	--
Chicago-Peoria	1,948	--
Chicago-Kansas City	11,449	87.7
Phila.-Pittsburgh	9,904	28.6
Portland-Eugene	4,448	--
Chicago-Minneapolis	5,508	-15.3
TOTAL SHORT DIST.:	445,680	1.2
Washington-Montreal	12,402	-16.8
New York-Florida	65,461	-0.9
Chicago-NY/Washington	29,037	-3.2
Chicago-Cincinnati/DC	18,526	21.7
Chicago-Seattle	35,652	21.9
Chicago-San Francisco	37,808	-0.5
Chicago-Los Angeles	38,571	8.8
Chicago-New Orleans	20,505	-2.9
Chicago-Texas	20,673	25.5
L.A.-New Orleans	12,058	12.9
L.A.-Seattle	61,436	11.9
Chicago-NY/Boston	32,765	-1.9
Boston-Newport News	6,301	-32.9
New York-Savannah	13,987	-19.0
Seattle-Salt Lake/Chi	21,029	26.3
New York-New Orleans	26,413	1.0
L.A./Ogden-Chicago	16,392	22.7
TOTAL LONG DIST.:	469,016	4.6
Special trains	4,000	--
SYSTEM TOTAL:	1,847,759	-3.6

Here are Amtrak's latest ridership figures--for June. The May figures were published in RTN #228. See that issue for an explanation of the change in reporting ridership data that Amtrak instituted in May.

Systemwide patronage was down 3.6% from the same month of 1980. Long distance and short distance categories both showed increases (4.6% and 1.2% respectively), while Northeast Corridor ridership showed a drop of 9.5%. These trends repeat the pattern of recent months, in which patronage in the East has been weak, while long distance trains particularly, especially those which sport new equipment, have been showing good ridership gains over 1980 levels.

Soft demand in the Northeast affects the overall system performance heavily, since about half of all Amtrak passengers ride in the Northeast. Amtrak has earlier attributed weak Northeast patronage to a "general slowdown in NE Corridor business travel being experienced by all public carriers".

For the fiscal year thus far--October thru June--overall systemwide ridership was down less than one percent (.8%) from the previous fiscal year. Short distance ridership was up 9.3%, long distance was up 7.4%, and the Northeast Corridor was down 7.5%. That 7.5% dropoff in the Northeast represents 668,898 passengers, or an average of over 74,000 per month.

It is interesting to note that a majority of the (none-403(b)) trains being discontinued in whole or in part by Amtrak have shown substantial ridership gains in the fiscal year to date (data are not available on some of the trains being cut out). Washington-Cincinnati is up 12.7%; Washington-Cincinnati-Chicago is up 17.3%; and Chicago-Texas is up 30.2%. Seattle-Vancouver is down 16.5%.

The single most-heavily patronized train continues to be the COAST STARLIGHT, with 415,782 passengers carried in the first nine months of this fiscal year, for an increase of 9.8% over the same period of FY 1980.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS derailed 20 miles north of New Orleans on Sep 14 after it struck a tractor-trailer truck that was hauling a crane. The truck had stalled on the tracks. The truck's driver managed to jump clear before the impact. The crash derailed the engine and three of the eight Amtrak cars of the northbound train. Four passengers and one Amtrak employee on the train reported minor injuries.....

A SPECIAL TRAIN Houston-New Orleans roundtrip, leaving Houston 9:15am on Sep 12 and reaching New Orleans 7:30pm, leaving New Orleans 5pm on Sep 13 and reaching Houston at 2am on Sep 14, as operated by Amtrak and Hurricane Travel of Houston. Dubbed the "Bum Phillips Special" after head coach Bum Phillips of the New Orleans Saints football team, the train carried about 1000 fans to and from the New Orleans Saints-Los Angeles Rams game in the Crescent City. Consist of the impressive train was F40 engines 358 and 300; Hi-level cars 39944, 39953, 39940, 39942, Superliner diner 38029, Hi-levels 39954, 39950, 39956, Superliners 33014 lounge, 34084, 34043, 34091, 34100, 34024, 34048, and 31031. Equipment was apparently deadheaded from Chicago on the INTER-AMERICAN route.....

WORLD'S FASTEST TRAIN, the French TGV or "Très Grande Vitesse", begins revenue service on Sep 27, following an inaugural run on Sep 22 which saw President Francois Mitterrand aboard. Mitterrand took the controls himself for a time. The new trains, which will better the speed of the Japanese Bullet Trains, will operate on the Paris-Lyon route, and are expected to cut an hour off the 3hr, 48min trip.....

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SPOKANE RAILROAD DAYS are being held Sep 25-26 as part of the Spokane Centennial Celebration, and Amtrak is displaying some Superliner cars for the general public at the Amtrak station on those days. Amtrak also took the occasion to announce to Spokane residents the change in service coming up Oct 25, when the EMPIRE BUILDER will split into two sections at Spokane, one going to Portland via Pasco and the Seattle section running via Wenatchee and Everett. Some Northwest rail observers, incidentally, are skeptical about the success of this new arrangement.....

31 AMTRAK CARS were observed early this month resting in a siding in Michigan City, Indiana. These included three Santa Fe baggage-dorm transition cars and an ex-Great Northern Great Dome.....

FREEMAN HUBBARD, former editor of Railroad Magazine, died in New York City on Aug 13 at the age of 87. His magazine merged with Railfan Magazine in 1978. His most recent book, the Encyclopedia of North American Railroading is due to be published in October by McGraw-Hill. His wife and two daughters survive him.....

THE WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION of Railroad Passengers issued an "Action Alert" to its members after the announcement of the October Amtrak cuts. The state of Wisconsin loses half its Amtrak service to these cuts. WisARP urged rail supporters to write Amtrak's Alan Boyd and demand that Wisconsin trains be included in the surviving system. The elimination of two Chicago-Milwaukee trains is especially hard to take for affected riders. Former NARP leader Anthony Haswell told a writer for Crain's Chicago Business this month that he has long argued that the Amtrak trains should be running on the North Western rather than the Milwaukee Road ("where the people are, instead of ... where the cows are"). WisARP noted that "The Chicago-Milwaukee corridor handled 28,971 passengers in April, a 4.4% decrease from 1980. Considering the poor scheduling of most of the corridor

trains, it's surprising the service is doing this well. The first train from Chicago leaves at 8:30am and carries, according to one ticket agent, a handful of people each day. Southbound, the NICOLLET TURBO (#336) and the EMPIRE BUILDER depart Milwaukee within 18 minutes of each other." WisARP has hopes that the replacement of the Turboliner equipment with other equipment including baggage cars could generate some mail contracts. Amtrak's Rima Parkhurst told the group that "There is nevertheless potential for Amtrak (mail service) on the Chicago-Milwaukee route, especially as fuel prices increase and highway transportation becomes too costly". The cutting out of the NORTH STAR, which takes place Oct 25, is particularly galling to Wisconsin rail supporters. WisARP said it's "illogical, considering phenomenal increases in ridership" on the train. "The NORTH STAR posted an incredible 117.6% ridership increase in April over the same period in 1980... Approximately 21,075 people rode the train in April, over 350 per trip.....

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SOME MORE DETAILS on the bridge-out foulup of the SOUTHWEST LIMITED reported last issue: In the early morning hours of Sep 6 a flash flood washed away a bridge on Santa Fe's main line near Powell AZ. Train 3 passed the location before the washout, but eastbound No. 4 was held at Needles CA until the extent of the damage could be determined. Later, an engine was attached to the rear of train 4, and it was pulled 70 miles west to Cadiz CA. At that point train 4 again headed east, over the normally freight-only Parker Cutoff to Matthie AZ, thence north on the freight-only "Peavine Line" via Skull Valley to rejoin its normal route at Williams Junction. This detour occurred during daylight hours on Sep 6. While Santa Fe freights used this same detour, it was decided to run subsequent runs of the SOUTHWEST LIMITED to Needles CA and Kingman AZ and to bus passengers between the two trains. Thus, train 4 that left L.A. on Sep 5 was the only one that made the detour. The bridge near Powell was restored to service on Sep 8.....

THE COAST STARLIGHT made a detour over the WP/BN "Inland Gateway" between Sacramento CA and Klamath Falls OR the morning of Sep 9. Train 14 had just left Davis when a derailment occurred on SP at Grass Lake CA, north of Dunsmuir. The train, already headed north, could not turn until Tehama, over 110 miles north of Davis. It did so, and returned to Davis, arriving five hours after it had left. Passengers for Redding and Dunsmuir were loaded onto a Trailways bus. The train then turned and detoured to Sacramento and onto the WP/BN, arriving Klamath Falls about 12 hours late. The bus reached Redding over six hours late (ironically, its passengers had been within 50 miles of Redding, then had to go 110 miles south again and return). Train 11 arrived Davis 9½ hours late on Sep 9.....

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SOME MORE DETAILS on the Sep 14 derailment of the CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, reported on page 16: Consist of the train was: engine 700; cars 1227, 2995 "Pine Brook", 28306, 21849, 21866, 21851, 21876, 21852, 2435 "Pacific Meadow." Damage to the Amtrak equipment was estimated as follows: engine 700 $75,000; baggage car 1227 $20,000; sleeper 2995 $20,000; Amdinette lounge 28306 $20,000. Another $3000 in track damage was incurred. Train 58, which was traveling about 50mph at the time of the collision, returned to New Orleans, towed by a switch engine, and was annulled. Passengers were bused to their destinations. The accident occurred at a private grade crossing. The flatbed truck was carrying a dragline which became stuck across the tracks.....

THE NARP BOARD of Directors meeting in San Francisco Oct 8-10 will include a Friday program (Oct 9) that is open to the public. For $20 one can attend morning and afternoon sessions and luncheon, all at the San Franciscan Hotel. Amtrak VP Bill Norman and Amtrak Board nominee Ronald Sheck are among the speakers, while Caltrans Director Adriana Gianturco will give the luncheon address. Write: Robert Glover, 832 Elizabeth, San Francisco 94114 (telephone 415-824-4819). Dr. Sheck will discuss his Amtrak 90 proposal (see RTN #228).....

GENERAL FARE INCREASE on Amtrak is expected to be announced after the Board of Directors meeting of Sep 25.....

THE "CALIFORNIAN" IS the "working name" of the Sacramento-Los Angeles overnight train to be operating Oct 25. A contest for Caltrans employees is expected to come up with a final name for the train. For the time being, fares for the route should be the same as those on the COAST STARLIGHT.....

THE SAN DIEGANS will also have schedule changes at the Oct 25 timetable change, but these are not available as we go to press.....

AMTRAK'S NEW RESERVATIONS computer which will go on line soon is to be called "SPIKE". Let's hope it puts in a golden performance.....

AMTRAK EQUIPMENT DISPLAYS featuring Superliner cars will be held in two Nebraska cities in October--Omaha on Oct 10 and Lincoln on Oct 11.....

AMTRAK'S CHICAGO YARDS will be dedicated on Sep 26.....

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SHORT-HAUL AIRLINE BUSINESS indeed seems on the decline, as pointed out in Guy Chartrand's letter to the MOT (see p. 6). Swiftaire, headquartered in San Luis Obispo, ceased business the morning of Sep 18, leaving San Luis Obispo and Bakersfield CA virtually without air service. All the more reason to promote more passenger train service.....

THE WASHINGTON POST on Sep 6 published an account of a "Cross-Country Train Trip Back to Childhood", from Washington DC to Spokane and return, by Winifred Scheffler. She tells more about people and places than about train operation, but the story is good advertising for Amtrak. (One incident: she and her daughter are not awakened upon arrival in Spokane, and wake up as the train is just leaving there. The crew backs the train up to the station again to let them detrain.).....

THE MOUNT WASHINGTON Cog Railway in New Hampshire has been put up for sale by its owner, Mrs. Ellen Teague of Pennsylvania. Mrs. Teague wants $3 million for the line. Her family has operated it for the past 50 years.....

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THE INTER-AMERICAN will be renamed the EAGLE when it is restructured in October. Providing thru service between the EAGLE and the SUNSET LIMITED will require a transfer of cars in San Antonio. No track construction or alteration is necessary, as the transfer of cars will occur over the same tracks over which the SP and the MoPac exchange freight cars. However, it will be necessary to install a 480-volt 3-phase power supply in the SP/Amtrak station. The transfer of cars will probably occur in the following fashion: (1) Train drops off end-of-line passengers at the Medina Street stop as in the past. (2) Train continues south toward MoPac's South San Antonio Yard for turning and servicing. (3) After crossing SP double-track mainline, train continues about 1/3 mile until last car clears crossover. (4) SP switcher couples onto last two cars; remainder of train continues south to SouSan Yard. (5) SP switcher pulls transfer cars backward thru exchange track into SP mainline and from there four miles into SP East Commerce Street depot. (6) At SP depot, cars are spotted on No. 3 track, which has a platform on its east side, and are connected to 480-volt power supply line. (7) Upon arrival of westbound SUNSET on No. 2 track, switcher attaches transfer cars to the rear of the train. (8) Northbound, this procedure is reversed. Operation of the EAGLE will be coordinated so as to provide for arrival in San Antonio the night before operational days of the SUNSET--i.e., Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Northbound the EAGLE will operate Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays (report from Alfred E. Ehm).....

AMTRAK ON-TIME PERFORMANCE systemwide for July was 68.7%, an increase of 5% over July 1980, but a slight decline from June 1981 figures.....

SOME CLASSICAL MUSIC recommended for transportation planners to plan better transportation systems by: "Quiet City" by Copland; "Once I Passed Thru a Populous City" by Delius; "Hark, Hark the LARK" by Schubert; "The LARK" by Castelnuovo-Tedesco; "The LARK Quartet" by Haydn; "The LARK Ascending" by Vaughan Williams; "Train of Joy Polka" by Johann Strauss Jr.; "STARLIGHT EXPRESS Incidental Music" by Elgar. To all of which one wag adds "Lexan's Suite" by Lindberg.....

DURANGO AND SILVERTON Narrow Gauge Railroad now runs all year long under its new owner, Charles E. Bradshaw. The exception is on Dec 24 and 25. The summer schedule runs thru Oct 24; during that time a train departs Durango daily at 8:30 am, and a second train operates at heavy patronage times. During the late fall period, Oct 25-Nov 29, one train leaves Durango daily at 9am. And during the winter (Nov 30-May 14) a train departs at 9:55am, running to a point about halfway to Silverton, turning on a wye, and going back to Durango. During the fall and winter, trains will be heated with steam heat. For more information, write D&SNG, 479 Main Ave, Durango CO 81301.....

THE MONTREALER DERAILED southbound at Hatfield MA on Sep 5. Consist of the train was: engine no. unknown; cars baggage no. unknown, sleepers 2086 & 2085, diner 8509, Amcafe 20206, Amcoaches 21823, 21824, 21833, 21834, 21865. No other details are available at this time.....

THE PRAIRIE MARKSMAN (Chicago to Peoria)--see photo above by Jack Ferry--is having its last run on Oct 4, as noted here previously. Unfortunately, the run did not prosper, and the state of Illinois, faced with a reduced transportation budget, is dropping its support. Note in the photo above, which is of train 311 leaving Chicago, that there is a baggage car in the consist.....

A NEW TOUR is added to Amtrak's list of tourist packages: a rail/motorhome tour of New England. Travelers will Amtrak to Boston, where they will pick up a choice of motorhomes (sleeping from 2 to 8 people), or an auto plus tent or travel trailer. Packages are arranged in conjunction with American Camper and Car Rentals. The program is similar to a "Roamin' Holidays" vacation Amtrak has offered in Florida for several years. Brochures are available from: Amtrak Distribution Center, PO Box 311, Addison IL 60101.....

THE MAPLE LEAF, the joint Amtrak-VIA train between New York and Toronto, is doing very well, reports Amtrak. Patronage per train has risen from 70 passengers crossing the border in May to 85 in June, 130 in July and 197 in August. This compares with about 30 riders per day on the previous Buffalo-Toronto run. VIA and Amtrak also offer a cooperative 29-day circle rail fare which includes this route as well as a visit to Montreal; fare is $101 for adults, $51 for kids.....

THE ALASKA RAILROAD has leased four Amtrak dome coaches while its own equipment is being converted from steam to head-end power heating.....

"RAIL PASSENGER SYSTEMS Act of 1981" is the title of a bill introduced by Congressman Henry S. Reuss of Wisconsin that names nearly 40 rail passenger corridors in the U.S. and gives Amtrak the power to set up a dedicated passenger right-of-way on each, helped by $2 billion in Federal loan guarantees, altho most of the money would be sought from private sources, as with the French TGV line between Paris and Lyon. Electrification of the lines would be done at the earliest date. The bill lists 19 corridors as prime candidates, and more could be added to the list.....

THE DOT OFFICIALS placed on the Amtrak Board of Directors (see page 5) are these: DOT Secretary Drew Lewis, Deputy Sec'y Darrell Trent, General Counsel John M. Fowler, Ass't Sec'y for Governmental Affairs Lee L. Verstandig, Deputy Ass't Sec'y for Transportation Policy Charles Swineburn, UMTA Administrator Arthur E. Teele, and Executive Ass't Mark S. Knouse. FRA Administrator was noticeably absent from the appointment list.....

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RESTRUCTURED BROADWAY LIMITED as of Oct 1 will be scheduled as follows: the Washington section leaves that city at 3:20pm, making stops at Rockville, Harpers Ferry, Martinsburg, Cumberland and Connellsville (McKeesport will be added later), and reaching Pittsburgh at 11:30pm. The combined train will arrive at Chicago at 9:35am. It will leave Chicago at 7:25pm, and the Washington section will leave Pittsburgh at 6:55am and arrive Washington at 3:10pm.....

AMTRAK DINING REPORT: A reader reports that the experimental upgraded food on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR "looked much better than the junk it replaced" even tho it is still served on plastic. Dinner menu prices on the SFZ are as follows: Short ribs of beef $7.75; Zephyr Royale (chicken in pastry puff) $6.50; Filet of Ocean White Fish $6.75; Chow Mein with egg roll $5.75; junior-sized spaghetti and franks $3.50. Breakfast has 3 choices: fresh scrambled eggs with sausage pattie $4.25; pancakes prepared on-board, with sausage pattie $4.25; and dry cereal with milk $1.75. Lunch as three sandwich selections at $3.25-4.50. The COAST STARLIGHT and the EMPIRE BUILDER both have conventional dining (both have the same menu), but the latter does not have linen tablecloths or flowers. The SOUTHWEST LIMITED has the airline-style food, and a reader says "food service on #4 is every bit as awful as has been reported; crew morale is extremely low, and customer acceptance is very low". The SFZ is trying out frozen food cooked to order in convection ovens, not pre-cooked, frozen and reheated in microwave.....

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: In RTN 228 on page 20 Amtrak Hartford-New Haven commuter service was called Conrail service due to a typo.....

THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY is a "multi-million dollar failure", a "dismal failure" and won't run beyond Dec 31, according to an Oregon TV news broadcast. Ridership of the train went up in August from 4001 the previous month to 4400--about 142 per day. However, in May a discount coupon promotion was attracting 200 to 300 patrons per day. Ed Immel, manager of the Willamette Valley Rail Project, said that Amtrak fares will go up 6.5% in October, but WILLAMETTE VALLEY fares will remain unchanged.....

THE SUNSET LIMITED faced an SP freight derailment as it ran westbound near Del Rio TX on Aug 30. The single-track line had been blocked since the afternoon of the 28th. The SUNSET waited 6 hours until the track was cleared. On Sep 10 a freight derailed at Orange TX and the eastbound SUNSET was detoured on the MoPac and KCS from Beaumont to Lake Charles.....

News in this issue is updated thru Sep 24, 1981.

AMTRAK BOARD (continued from page 5)

the controversial procedure used in the Nixon administration and later ruled illegal by the courts. A line-item veto would effectively be a cut of up to 10% in selected cagegories.

Even if the CARDINAL is saved by some means, there would be a temporary period of discontinuance starting Oct 1. NARP said that the railroad is being cooperative in preparing for the eventuality that the train could stop and then resume.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Governments that have written off the passenger train as a costly anachronism must surely pause for a moment on September 27 to wonder who is out of step. In less than two decades maximum scheduled speeds have jumped from 160 to 260 km/h--all the more remarkable in that this rise of over 60 per cent followed 130 years of continuous technical development... There are many places around the globe where major centres of population could be brought within two or three hours of each other by trains averaging 200 km/h. If a new railway offers the most economical solution between Paris and Lyon, there is no obvious reason why the answer should be different between Taipei and Kaohsiung, where the Taiwan Railway Administration has just unveiled plans for a 363 km line costing $5.5 billion U.S. that would provide two-hour transits. Yet the U.S. and Canadian governments can think only in terms of cutting back existing services still further."

--Railway Gazette International editorial, September.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"President Francois Mitterrand inaugurates the world's fastest train service tonight, riding alongside the engineer at 160 miles an hour... Mitterrand is making the 264-mile trip north from Lyon to Paris in one of the new TGVs, that being the acronym for 'train a grande vitesse,' or high speed train."

--Associated Press release, Sep 22.

"The train is called TGV--an acronym for 'train grande vitesse,' or high-speed train."

--Associated Press release, Sep 23.

(Oui, mais Très, Très!)

CARS & CONSISTS

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 14, San Jose Sep 11: engines SP8543, Atk 229 & 286; cars 1245, Hi-level 39921, Superliners 31027, 31000, 34095, 34066, 33020, 38021, 32048, 32039, 32062, SP 293, SP 141 "Oakland", SP 140 "Stanford".

*EMPIRE BUILDER, train 8, Seattle Sep 13: engines 355, 372; cars 1267, Hi-level 39932, Superliners 31037, 34045, 33007, 38007, 32002, 32058 (last day of daily operation eastbound).

*BLUE WATER LIMITED, train 364, Chicago Sep 6: engine 383; cars custom class-Amcafe 20143, Amcoaches 21876, 21120, 21192, 21857.

*TWILIGHT LIMITED, train 355, Niles MI Sep 6: engine 262; cars 21827 & 21863 Amcoaches, Amdinette 20214, Amcoach 21879.

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 4, Kansas City Sep 1: engines 239, 252 (F40s), 633 (SDP); cars 1173, 1226, Hi-level 39929, Superliner 31017, Hi-level 39960, Super-34096, Hi-level 39975, Superliners 38005, 32044, 32027, private cars (off at Kansas City) FTX3 "E.C. Redfield", FTX4 "Glen Annie", FTX7 "J.H. Redfield" (Finlay Fun-Time Tours cars). Train 3, same, Sep 5: engines 234, 301, 287 (F40s); cars 1141, 1157, 1228, Hi-level 39913, Superliner 31026, Hi-levels 39946, 39958, Superliners 34057, 33024, 38011, 32034, 32051, 32046, 32008. Train 4, same, Sep 7: engines 239 (F40), 626 (SDP); cars 1220, 1219, Hi-level 39904, Superliner 31005, Hi-level 39952, Superliner 34037, Hi-level 39972, Superliners 38014, 32023, 32036 (left K.C. 10:10pm, 14hrs, 30mins late due to washout east of Needles and detour from Cadiz on Phoenix branch to Flagstaff; arrived Chicago 6:18am, 14hrs, 8mins late.)

*LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 48, Chicago Sep 17: engines 366, 371; cars 1615, 2052, 2996 "Pine Hill", 4615, 4603, 4635, 3100, 8504, 4002, 4003, 2903 "Pacific Bend", 1247.

*INTER-AMERICAN, train 22, Temple TX Sep 3: engines 362 (from Houston), 358; cars (Superliners) 32060, 38002, 34099, 31018, 31028, 34025 (last two from Houston). Train 21, same: engines 359 (to Houston), 374; cars (Superliners) 32003 "Edward L. Ullman", 38028, 31014, 34082, 31008, 34009 (last two to Houston).

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 41, Chicago Sep 8: engines 376, 330; cars 1156, 1167, 1166, 1612, 2442 "Cottonwood Grove", 2980 "Pine Creek", 2081, 4633, 4717, 4700, 8517, 3103, 4715, 4723, 4709, 2983 "Pine Arroyo".

*ANN RUTLEDGE, train 304, Kansas City Sep 4: engine 262; cars 20235, 21116, 21210, private cars FTX4 "Glen Annie" sleeper, FTX7 "Julia Harvey Redfield" sleeper, FTX3 "Elihu C. Redfield" observation (Finlay Fun-Time Tour cars).

RAIL FANTRIPS

Oct 23-25: San Francisco/Oakland-Yosemite RT via SAN JOAQUIN & bus, visit to Yosemite Mountain-Sugar Pine RR; 1 night in Fresno, 1 at Yosemite Lodge. $180 double occup., $225 single. NRHS Central Coast Chap, 316 Innisfree Dr, Daly City CA 94015.

Oct 24: Strasburg Special, Washington DC-Strasburg PA RT; GG-1 & Amfleet on Amtrak, steam on Strasburg RR; Hershey Farm Restaurant dinner. $43, $39 kids. Strasburg Special, PO Box 456, Laurel MD 20707. (Sponsor: NRHS, DC chapter.)

Oct 24-25: Autumn Leaf Weekend, Richmond VA-Alleghany Central RR (Intervale). Bus from Richmond, special train on ACRR with dinner aboard, overnight at Intervale $90 single. NRHS Old Dominion Chap, Box 8583, Richmond VA 23226.

Nov 1-15: Mexico Adventure Tour, L.A.-Mexico City RT on Amer. Ass'n of Private RR Car Owners convention train (for tourists, not conventioneers). $1965 single Limit 35. Great Western Tours, PO Box 77234, San Francisco CA 94107. 777-5794.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to:
RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

BOOKS

● "The Trolley Titans", Special no. 76 from Interurban Press, is now available. The new book, as its subtitle indicates, is A Mobile History of Atlanta. Atlanta's public transport system began with mule cars, then electric railways, later a large trolley bus system, and it now includes the rapidly-growing MARTA rail transit system. The men who were the Trolley Titans built rival streetcar lines, and their long struggle became known as "The Second Battle of Atlanta." In this splendid, 124-page hardbound book, author O. E. Carson gives us a painstakingly-done and authoritative history of these intriguing transit lines. The beautifully-produced volume is complete with many maps, 124 historical photos, and a complete index. Page size is 8½x11 on high-quality coated stock. There is a color dust jacket and frontispiece painting by Gil Reid. Price is $27.95 (plus $1.25 postage if ordered by mail) from Interurban Press, PO Box 6444, Glendale CA 91205.

● "Train Guide Europe" is one of the most unusual and informative rail travel guide books we have seen. Authored and published by George Pandi, this 383-page paperback (size 5x8) is different in that it doesn't tell the reader what to see by train in Europe, nor does it give timetables. Instead, it is packed with all the vital and hard-to-obtain information one needs when traveling abroad by train. There is a chapter for each country of Continental Europe, and each chapter is divided into major city sections. In each, the reader learns how to get around--locations and telephone numbers are given for such vital services as tourist information, city transit, taxi, police, ambulance, physician, pharmacy, airport, lost and found, etc. For each city, a small map indicates the rail lines and their destinations leading out of town. Not only that, but a diagram of the city's train station is shown, with locations and hours of operation of all station facilities shown. (Parenthetically, European stations offer many more of what RTN's Glenn Lee calls "life support systems" than do American stations.) As an example, the Dusseldorf station has 33 listings in the book, from Train Information to Pharmacy. Besides all this, there is an 81-page preliminary section of general information about rail travel in Europe, even including translations of common needed phrases in each language, and addresses and telephone numbers of American and Canadian offices of each European railroad. The book is distributed primarily thru the mail from the publisher: Intertrain, Box 550, Victoria Station, Montreal, P.Q., Canada H3Z 2Y6. Price is $7.90 U.S. or $8.90 Canadian, postpaid.

● The C&O Historical Society's 1982 Steam and Diesel Calendar is now available. The price of the calendar has not been increased--it's $3.50 and can be ordered from 1982 C&O Calendar, Dept. 19, 2610 McDaniel Court, Grove City OH 43123. This year's calendar, with 13 black & white photos on coated stock, is a balanced presentation of steam and diesel power as well as photos of C&O, Pere Marquette, and Hocking Valley subjects. Dates of historical C&O events are listed thruout the calendar's pages. Dates of holidays and moon phases are noted also.

EXPRESS ADS

MASTERS OF RAIL TRAVEL--and Amtrak is our specialty. We enjoy seeing that you have the best accommodations available. Call or write us--GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton Palace Hotel, Suite 900, San Francisco 94105; (415) 398-2994. Receive your tickets by mail--pay by check or credit card. It's easy--one call does it all

DINING CAR DISHES, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, stationery, rules, metal & Pullman items, annual reports from 30 railroads. Long stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kan. 67213. Will buy items.

Read the most up to date, authoritative news regarding rail, bus, airline and other timetables inc. transit. In "The First Edition" published monthly by National Ass'n of Timetable Collectors. Finest publication of its kind. Annual dues $14. Tom Coval, Membership Director, 21 E. Robin Rd, Holland PA 18966. Join now and also receive "The Timetable Collector", a beautiful quarterly publication.

EAST COAST RAILROADIANA SHOW Sat. Oct 10, 1981, Geo. Washington Motor Inn, US Rte #1 (Roosevelt Blvd) & Penn. Turnpike Exit 28, Trevose PA (NE Philadelphia area) 9am-3pm. Public invited. Tables available to dealers 1st come 1st served. Tom Coval, 21 E. Robin Rd, Holland PA 18966. This fantastic event is sponsored by the New York Chapter of the National Association of Timetable Collectors.

Lackawanna & Wyoming Valley Chapter, N.R.H.S. 1982 Railway Calendar. 13 photos of rails in Northeastern Pennsylvania - steam, diesel, transit, and traction. 8½x14" $2.50 each. Calendar, Box 1152, Scranton, PA 18501.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads: only $1.25 per square inch. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

This SWAN CATALYSIS on that RED CARS HEARING for Los Angeles and Orange Counties is going beyond anything this transit catalyst--expediting the improvement of low-cost rail transit--has ever done before. The $5 publication will include appendixes of perhaps all the post-Hearing catalysis, brutally frank language to the establishment aimed at getting them off their duff and facing the problems and opportunities on Red Cars. There is a prevailing trend that getting Red Cars is simple, need not be shared with the public, and the process needs no catalysis. Well, if it were that simple, I suggest it would have happened a long time ago. I suggest the people are ready, equal to being informed, educated, ready to be partners in a great quest. A quest must be right, righteous. Robert J. Swan, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90801. Final.